

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

✓ Page 1, please change the title to "VARIABLE BUOYANCY BUOY FOR MOORING MOBILE OFFSHORE DRILLING UNITS" according to the Examiner's suggestion.

✓ Page 55, please change the title to "VARIABLE BUOYANCY BUOY FOR MOORING MOBILE OFFSHORE DRILLING UNITS" according to the Examiner's suggestion.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Sub C1  
30. (Amended) For use in a [riser] mooring line extending from the sea floor to the sea surface, a variable buoyancy buoy comprising:

a frame having first and second ends;

a first buoyancy member mounted on the frame;

B  
a second buoyancy member [selectively] removably mountable on the frame to change the buoyancy of the buoy;

means for securing the second buoyancy member on the frame;  
and

means located at the first and second ends of the frame for securing the buoy in the [riser] mooring line.

31. (Amended) The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim 30 further characterized by a plurality of second buoyancy members

*Sub C*  
each [selectively] ~~removably mountable~~ on the frame to change the buoyancy of the buoy, and the means for securing the second buoyancy members in engagement with the frame.

*B1*  
<sup>3</sup> 32. The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim <sup>2</sup> 31 wherein the first buoyancy member and the second buoyancy members are formed from syntactic foam.

*Sub C*  
~~33. The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim 32 wherein the frame includes a shaft extending through the first buoyancy member, a fixed plate comprising one end of the frame and secured to the shaft in engagement with the first buoyancy member, and a second plate comprising the opposite end of the frame and selectively engageable with the shaft for securing the variable buoyancy members in engagement therewith.~~

34. (Amended) The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim 33 wherein the [retaining] securing means comprises a fastener extending through the second plate and the shaft for securing the second plate and the variable buoyancy members in engagement with the shaft.

*B2*  
35. (Amended) A variable buoyancy buoy comprising:  
a frame having first and second ends;

Sub  
C2  
~~a first plate securably mounted to the first end of the frame;~~

a second plate selectively positionable along the frame  
between the first and second ends of the frame;

a first buoyancy member mounted on the frame adjacent to the  
first plate; and

a second buoyancy member [selectively] removably mountable on  
the frame between the first buoyancy member and the second plate,  
whereby the second plate is positioned along the frame proximate  
the second buoyancy member.

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36. (Amended) The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim  
35 further comprises a third buoyancy member [selectively]  
removably mountable on the frame between the second buoyancy member  
and the first buoyancy member.

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37. (Amended) The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim  
36 further comprises a fourth buoyancy member [selectively]  
removably mountable on the frame between the second buoyancy member  
and the first buoyancy member.

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38. (Amended) The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim  
37 further comprises a fifth buoyancy member [selectively]  
removably mountable on the frame between the second buoyancy member  
and the first buoyancy member.

<sup>10</sup>  
~~39~~. The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim ~~35~~ wherein the first buoyancy member and the second buoyancy member are formed from syntactic foam.

<sup>6</sup>  
~~40. The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim 35 wherein the shaft includes a plurality of spaced apart holes along at least a portion of the length of the shaft that receive a fastener extending through the second plate such that the second plate may be positioned in a plurality of locations along the shaft.~~

<sup>11</sup>  
~~41~~. The variable buoyancy buoy according to Claim ~~35~~ further comprises first and second pad eyes respectively positioned on the first and second ends of the shaft.

#### REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claims 30-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner rejected claims 30, 31, 35-38, 40 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Corley. The Examiner rejected claims 32-34 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Corley in view of Havlick.

Claims 30-41 remain for reconsideration in this application. For the reasons set forth in detail below, it is respectfully